



United States Attorney District of New Jersey

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CONTACT: Rebekah Carmichael
Office of Public Affairs
(973) 645-2888

LAKE HIAWATHA, NEW JERSEY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO IMPERSONATING AN INTERNATIONAL LAW FIRM AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTION IN WIRE FRAUD SCHEME

TRENTON, N.J. – A Lake Hiawatha, New Jersey, man pleaded guilty today to a scheme in which he defrauded an investor by impersonating representatives of an international law firm and a financial institution, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Vlade Stojchevski, 40, pleaded guilty before United States District Judge Garrett E. Brown to an Information charging him with committing wire fraud.

On October 26, 2009, Vlade Stojchevski was arrested and detained on a federal complaint charging him with making counterfeit checks. According to the Complaint, Stojchevski made photocopies of a genuine bank cashier's check, endorsed them, and presented the photocopies as valid forms of payment. As part of Stojchevski's plea to the wire fraud count, he admitted his involvement in making the counterfeit checks and agreed that conduct should be taken into account at his sentencing.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made during Stojchevski's guilty plea proceeding:

The victim of the wire fraud scheme first provided money to the defendant in approximately 1998 or 1999, which Stojchevski told the victim was invested in a Russian account. In 2007, Stojchevski solicited additional investments from the victim using several different ruses.

Stojchevski admitted that he induced the victim to invest extra monies with him by falsely telling him that liens and debts had been placed on his Russian account. Stojchevski then falsely told the victim that he had hired an international law firm headquartered in New York and having an office in Moscow, Russia (identified in the Information as D&L), to help recover the victim's investment. In order to carry out the ruse, Stojchevski opened a New Jersey bank account in D&L's name and created false documents, including letterhead and correspondence purportedly from D&L. As a result of Stojchevski's false representations, the victim provided checks to D&L which Stojchevski used for his own benefit. According to the terms of the plea agreement, Stojchevski's scheme caused losses to the investor of at least \$400,000 and up to \$1 million.

At sentencing, Stojchevski faces a maximum potential penalty of 20 years in prison and a

fine the greater of \$250,000, or twice the gain or loss from the offense. Judge Brown set sentencing for October 4, 2010. Stojchevski is currently serving a state prison term for an unrelated crime; Judge Brown determined bail will be reviewed at the conclusion of that sentence.

In determining the actual sentence, Judge Brown will consult the advisory United States Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges that take into account the severity and characteristics of the offense, the defendant's criminal history, if any, and other factors. The judge, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence. Parole has been abolished in the federal system. Defendants who are given custodial terms must serve nearly all that time.

U.S. Attorney Fishman credited special agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Michael B. Ward of the Newark, New Jersey Field Office, with the investigation leading to today's guilty plea.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Joseph Mack of the U.S. Attorney's Office Health Care and Government Fraud Unit.

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Defense counsel: Patrick Joyce, Esq., South Orange, N.J.